

## Claims

### *I claim:*

1. A method for presenting electronic mail messages to an operator, including the steps of

loading a plurality of headers from a mail server, each one of said headers associated with an electronic mail message;

receiving a dynamic selection of a first one of said electronic mail messages from an operator;

presenting said first electronic mail message to said operator;

identifying a second one of said electronic mail messages; and

loading said second electronic mail message for later presentation, without interrupting presentation of said first electronic mail message.

2. A method as in claim 1, including the steps of presenting at least one of said plurality of headers to said operator; and

interrupting said step of loading said plurality of headers, responsive to said dynamic selection of said first electronic mail message.

3. A method as in claim 1, including the step of presenting at least one of said plurality of headers to said opera-

1 tor in a first window; wherein said step of presenting said first  
2 electronic mail message uses a second window.

3  
4 4. A method as in claim 1, including the step of pre-  
5 senting to said operator a status of said step of loading said  
6 second electronic mail message.

7  
8 5. A method as in claim 4, wherein said step of pre-  
9 senting includes the steps of

10 displaying a partial preview of said second electronic  
11 mail message; and

12 altering said partial preview in response to a change  
13 in status of said step of loading said second electronic mail  
14 message.

15  
16 6. A method as in claim 4, wherein said step of pre-  
17 senting includes the step of displaying a preview of said second  
18 electronic mail message in a distinct format.

19  
20 7. A method as in claim 4, wherein said step of pre-  
21 senting includes the step of displaying at least one graphic ele-  
22 ment.

23  
24 8. A method as in claim 4, wherein said step of pre-  
25 senting includes the step of displaying text.

26  
27 9. A method as in claim 1, including the steps of  
28 receiving a dynamic selection of a third one of said  
29 electronic mail messages from said operator;

1           interrupting said step of loading said second elec-  
2   tronic mail message, responsive to said dynamic selection of said  
3   third electronic mail message.

4  
5           10. A method as in claim 1, including the steps of  
6       storing said second electronic mail message in memory;  
7   and

8       presenting said second electronic mail message in re-  
9   sponse to selection thereof by said operator.

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11          11. A method as in claim 1, wherein at least one of  
12   said electronic mail messages comprises a plurality of pages of  
13   hypertext for presentation to said operator.

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15          12. A method as in claim 11, wherein said step of pre-  
16   senting said first electronic mail message to said operator in-  
17   cludes the steps of

18       selecting one of said plurality of pages of hypertext;  
19   and  
20       presenting said one page to said operator.

21  
22          13. A method as in claim 1, wherein said step of iden-  
23   tifying a second electronic mail message is responsive to a pref-  
24   erence by said operator.

25  
26          14. A method as in claim 1, wherein said step of iden-  
27   tifying a second electronic mail message is responsive to a  
28   sender of said second electronic mail message.

1           15. A method as in claim 1, wherein said step of iden-  
2     tifying a second electronic mail message is responsive to a set  
3     of recipients of said second electronic mail message.

4  
5           16. A method as in claim 1, wherein said step of iden-  
6     tifying a second electronic mail message is responsive to a pri-  
7     ority value for said second electronic mail message.

8  
9           17. A method as in claim 1, wherein said step of iden-  
10    tifying a second electronic mail message is responsive to a key-  
11    word in one of said headers associated with said second elec-  
12    tronic mail message.

13  
14           18. A method as in claim 1, wherein said step of iden-  
15    tifying a second electronic mail message is responsive to a key-  
16    word in said second electronic mail message.

17  
18           19. A method as in claim 1, wherein said step of iden-  
19    tifying a second electronic mail message is responsive to a size  
20    of said second electronic mail message.

21  
22           20. Apparatus for presenting electronic mail messages  
23    to an operator, said apparatus including

24           a mail client disposed for coupling ot a mail server  
25    using a communication link;

26           means at said mail client for loading a plurality of  
27    headers from a mail server, each one of said headers associated  
28    with an electronic mail message;

1           an input port at said mail client disposed for receiv-  
2   ing a dynamic selection of a first one of said electronic mail  
3   messages from an operator;

4           an output port at said mail client disposed for pre-  
5   senting said first electronic mail message to said operator;

6           means at said mail client for identifying a second one  
7   of said electronic mail messages; and

8           means at said mail client for loading said second elec-  
9   tronic mail message for later presentation, without interrupting  
10  presentation of said first electronic mail message.

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12           21. Apparatus as in claim 20, including an input ele-  
13   ment coupled to said input port.

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15           22. Apparatus as in claim 20, including an output ele-  
16   ment coupled to said output port.

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18           23. Apparatus as in claim 20, including  
19   means for coupling at least one of said plurality of  
20   headers to said output port; and

21   means for interrupting said step of loading said plu-  
22   rality of headers, responsive to said dynamic selection of said  
23   first electronic mail message.

24  
25           24. Apparatus as in claim 20, including  
26   a first window coupled to said output port for present-  
27   ing at least one of said plurality of headers to said operator;  
28   and

1 a second window coupled to said output port for pre-  
2 sending said first electronic mail message to said operator.

3  
4 25. Apparatus as in claim 20, including a progress in-  
5 dicator for loading said second electronic mail message.

6  
7 26. Apparatus as in claim 25, wherein said progress  
8 indicator includes a partial preview of said second electronic  
9 mail message.

10  
11 27. A method as in claim 4, wherein said progress in-  
12 dicator includes a preview of said second electronic mail message  
13 in a distinct format.

14  
15 28. A method as in claim 4, wherein said progress in-  
16 dicator includes at least one graphic element.

17  
18 29. A method as in claim 4, wherein said progress in-  
19 dicator includes text.

20  
21 30. Apparatus as in claim 20, including  
22 means for disposing said input port for receiving a dy-  
23 namic selection of a third one of said electronic mail messages  
24 from said operator;

25 means for interrupting loading said second electronic  
26 mail message, responsive to said dynamic selection of said third  
27 electronic mail message.

28  
29 31. Apparatus as in claim 20, including

1           a memory;

2           means at said mail client for storing said second elec-  
3 tronic mail message in said memory;

4           means at said mail client for reading said second elec-  
5 tronic mail message from said memory in response to selection  
6 thereof by said operator.

7  
8           32. Apparatus as in claim 20, wherein at least one of  
9 said electronic mail messages comprises a plurality of pages of  
10 hypertext for presentation to said operator.

11  
12           33. Apparatus as in claim 32, including  
13 means for selecting one of said plurality of pages of  
14 hypertext; and  
15 means for coupling said one page to said output port.

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17           34. Apparatus as in claim 20, wherein said means for  
18 identifying a second electronic mail message is responsive to a  
19 preference by said operator.

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21           35. A method as in claim 1, wherein said means for  
22 identifying a second electronic mail message is responsive to a  
23 sender of said second electronic mail message.

24  
25           36. A method as in claim 1, wherein said means for  
26 identifying a second electronic mail message is responsive to a  
27 set of recipients of said second electronic mail message.

1           37. A method as in claim 1, wherein said means for  
2 identifying a second electronic mail message is responsive to a  
3 priority value for said second electronic mail message.

4  
5           38. A method as in claim 1, wherein said means for  
6 identifying a second electronic mail message is responsive to a  
7 keyword in one of said headers associated with said second elec-  
8 tronic mail message.

9  
10          39. A method as in claim 1, wherein said means for  
11 identifying a second electronic mail message is responsive to a  
12 keyword in said second electronic mail message.

13  
14          40. A method as in claim 1, wherein said means for  
15 identifying a second electronic mail message is responsive to a  
16 size of said second electronic mail message.